42

A LETTER TO THE JESUITS in Priſon;

Shewing them how they may get out.

FROM

Mr. William Hutchinſon alias Bury

For Fourteen Years of their SOCIETY;

But now of the Church of ENGLAND.

Honoured Dear SIRS,

DO not vainly flatter your ſelves with the hopes of Martyrdom; You know as well as I can tell you: 'Tis the Cauſe, not purely Suffering, which makes a Martyr. If the State of *Venice* might lawfully prohibit you their Territories, ſo may our Gracious Sovereign lawfully prohibit you his Dominions; provided he tolerate (as he does) a ſufficient number of Chriſtian Prieſts and Biſhops to Preach the Doctrine, and Adminiſter the Sacraments of our Lord Jeſus to his People. Seing therefore (contrary to His Majeſties Prohibition) you have entred his Kingdoms, to the diſturbance of the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Peace, and to the diſquieting of his pious Subjects Conſciences, by telling them they are damned for not communicating with a Prelate as their ſupream Paſtor, a thouſand Miles off, who has no authority over them: Confeſs your fault and ask pardon, and be gone; or elſe heartily joyn with your Natural Liege and his Biſhops, in reforming abuſes crept into the Chriſtian world through the negligence of Eccleſiaſtical Prelates, and in reſtoring the true primitive Chriſtian Doctrine and Diſcipline to our poor Country. Say no more falſly, you are hardly dealt with, to be prohibited your Native Soyl under pain of being Hang'd, Drawn and Quarter'd, for loving your Neighbours as your ſelves, for gently admoniſhing them they are precipitating themſelves into eternal Miſery by all manner of ſins and wickedneſs. Say no more neither, our

62...1751

Bleſſed Lord bids you go teach all Nations his Holy Goſpel; but no ſays King *James*; I except my three Kingdoms of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*. You are miſtaken, you are not prohibited *England* either by our gracious Soveraign or his Royal Grandfather, for your preaching Chriſts holy Goſpel; but for your ſuperadded Doctrines of the Popes Temporal and Spiritual Supremacy, of new deviſed Indulgences and other Traſhy Tenents and practices prejudicial to our Souls health, and deſtructive of the Civil Polity. Joyn your ſelves to our Communion, and bring a long with you as much zeal as you pleaſe againſt all manner of ſin and wickedneſs, only leave your Treaſonable and Traſhy Doctrines behind you, and you are welcom.

Know my Dear Friends, God is deſervedly angry with your Society for your Depoſing, and other Traſhy Doctrines. Do not die with an Equivocation in your Mouths, but confeſs (to the glory of God and the confuſion of your Order,) that not a man of your Society hath writ againſt the Popes power of Depoſing Heretical Princes, but either they treated not the queſtion, or elſe they poſitively held he had ſuch a power: As have done you know, your *Santarel*, *Bellarmine*, *Suarez* and others. And if your later Writers teach no ſuch Doctrine, 'tis not becauſe they hold it not, but becauſe they are politickly prohibited to meddle with the Controverſy. Your ſilence in this matter is a tacit conſent, unleſs you would poſitively renounce what your prime Doctors have poſitively taught: If this be Chriſtian Doctrine, doubt not to die for it, if not, abjure it. And know, if you ſuffer Impriſonment or other Grievances for ſuch Treaſonable Doctrines, you are in the ſight of God no more Confeſſors, or Martyrs, then common Highway-men, or other Fellons. Acknowledge all your damnable Doctrines of Depoſing Princes for Hereſie or Miſ-government, of Equivocation, and forſwearing by Oath what you are guilty of, to defend your honor, *&c.* For theſe and your other damnable Doctrines God evidently puniſhes you and your Party. Heartily renounce theſe and God and men will favour you. To ſay you renounce King-killing Doctrine is an Equivocation: 'Tis ill halting before a Cripple; a Depoſed King is no King, but an Uſurper and Rebel, if he go on after his depoſition to exerciſe Regal power: And conſequently it becomes lawful to the next man that meets him to Kill him, if the next Heir ſo command. So that, whoſoever holds the Depoſing Doctrine, neceſſarily holds King-killing Doctrine. And therefore if it be your unhappy fate to die at *Tyburn*, which I hope it will not be, renounce candidly the Depoſing Doctrine, and confeſs ingenuouſly withall, that your Writers univerſally either teach it, or elſe ſay nothing of the Queſtion. Our Lord Jeſus is purging his Church, he abhorres the Papal Infallibility, his Spiritual and much more his Temporal univerſal Supremacy, your Indulgence Doctrine, your Attrition Doctrine, *&c.* And ſo muſt you too, if you ever expect his favor in this World or the other.

If ever any ones ſin was legible in their puniſhment, your and your parties is: Take notice then of theſe ſeroius Reflections. By a *Breve* from the Pope your General Licenſed *Santarel*'s Book for Depoſing of Princes for Hereſie or Miſ-government: And you are accuſed that your General by a *Breve* from the Pope appointed Officers Military and Civil in our Gracious Soveraigns Dominions. You commonly teach the people that our Bleſſed Saviours natural Body is in Heaven and on Earth at the ſame time; and your chief accuſer muſt (you ſay) prove himſelf to have been in two places at once to make his Teſtimony valid. You ſay 'its Pride and unſufferable Arrogancy to queſtion the Decrees of General Councils, undoubtly after they are in a manner univerſally received; and they are looked

upon

upon as willfully blind who queſtion your guiltineſs after a whole Parliament has reſolved you guilty, eſpecially after this has been alſo in a manner generally believed by the whole people. You falſly maintain an uſurped Papal Power, and you are accuſed to make uſe of it to Treaſon and Rebellion. You have notoriouſly abuſed the power of Eccleſiaſtical Diſpenſation, partly by extending it to Divine Obligations in Oaths and Vows made to God, and manifeſtly by making uſe of it to avarice and gain: And you are believed to have a Diſpenſation for Lies and Perjuries in the very Article of Death. Your exacting a ſet mulct upon Prieſts for Concubins, looked much like a giving leave to keep one for the increaſe of the Church's Treaſury: And you are accuſed to have leave to commit moſt horrid Villanies for the Church's intereſt. You have abuſed the Power of Abſolution, to abſolve as oft as cuſtomary ſinners pleaſed: And you are accuſed with perjury to atteſt your innocency, and then to abſolve one another afterwards. Not that I accuſe you of the Crimes laid to your charge, I leave you to God and your own Conſciences. But I ſay, your Doctrines are the juſt cauſe of all your ſufferings. You have taught the World to equivocate and deny with Oathes the Crimes they are guilty of, and every one is laughed at as ſenſleſs who believes a word you ſay or ſwear in yonr own defence. If in your perſons you be innocent of the crimes you are charged with, your Doctrines are more manifeſtly puniſhed by the Providence of Heaven. At length acknowledge not onely your Perſonal, but your very Church-faults. 'Tis a notorious cheat, that your Church is chargeable with nothing but the miſtakes of General Councils. If I cannot meet with an immediate Ghoſtly Guide, one in ten but he teaches me dangerous Doctrines and Practiſes, my Soul is in no leſs danger by my being in your Communion, than if the Errors and Fopperies of every petty Confeſſor were ſo many Decrees of Oecumenical Aſſemblies. That which influences our Souls either to good or bad, are the notoriouſly known Sentiments of our immediate Guides, and not the ſecret and to few known Deciſions of Chriſtian Councils. I will not ſay with a Friend of yours, Calumny was your crime, and by Calumuy you are puniſhed: yet I wiſh you would reflect how falſly and undeſervedly you calumniated the Great Mr. *White*, and the Divine Mr. *Arnauld* (and indeed whom you pleaſed) in the Court of *Rome*, and diſparaged amongſt your Devotes their incomparable Writings with blind and ſurreptitious Cenſures. *We are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul when he beſought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us*, Gen. 42. 21.

You may ſay, and perhaps truly, you never were taught your ſelves the Depoſing Doctrine, nor never taught it others; becauſe the teaching of it by ſome of your Authors made you odious to Chriſtian Princes, and thereupon your General prohibited all medling with the Queſtion. You may alſo perhaps truly ſay, you do not believe the Doctrine to be true, that is, as an Article of your Faith. But what ſecurity is this to Chriſtian Princes, whom you deem Hereticks, if in your hearts you generally think it a probable opinion, partly for intrinſecal reaſons, but manifeſtly for the Authorities of your own, and other Doctors of your Church? Eſpecially you commonly maintaining as you do, that it's lawful to follow a probable opinion, though but even extrinſecally probable, as you ſpeak; and this without diſpute, when great Good is likely to enſue upon your acting according to ſuch an opinion. God forbid I ſhould go about to add afflictions to your afflictions, but I would gladly ſhew you how you may appeaſe God and Man's anger againſt you, by inducing you to an humble and penitent acknowledgment of your manifeſt and notorious

faults.

faults. Your blind zeal for the Pope's Temporal and Spiritual Power, has brought all this evil upon you; examine it well and impartially, at least now when God afflicts you for the idolizing of it, lest you hear, and deservedly, *Jer.* 2. 30. *In vain have I smitten your children, they received no correction.*

Acknowledge the plain truth; the Pope, as from Christ, has no more power in *England*, than the Bishop of *Canterbury* has in *Italy*. All Bishops are absolute Spiritual Monarchs in their Dioceses; Archbishops, Primates, and Patriarchs, are purely humane inventions, for Union and Order sake, in the vacancy of General & Provincial Councils; as for a Supreme Pastor, that would be as inconvenient, as a Civil Monarch of the whole World. The Government of the Church of Christ is not Monarchical, but Aristocratical; St. *Peter* was no more the Vicar of Christ, than any one of the other Apostles, they were all his Vicars, and so is every Christian Bishop, and has power all over the World to ordain Priests, to preach the Gospel, and to administer Christs Sacraments; but by mutual accord for Order's sake, and to avoid confusion, they exercise not this power out of their particular Dioceses. The twelve Apostles divided the World amongst them, that so their labours might be more profitable, and no place left uncultivated; the like is done and to be done by all Christian Bishops till Dooms-day come. Consider attentively, whether seeing Jesus Christ resolved his Church should be spread all over the Earth, it be not as certain he would never ordain an Universal Monarch over it, as 'tis certain he would not appoint a Government which would be impracticable, useless, and senseless. A Monarch even over the Western part of the World, what mischief has it not done, in making strange Doctrines and Practises universal? such are the Doctrines of infusion of habitual grace by the words of Absolution, Indulgences, mock-Absolutions, *&c.* No less notorious mischiefs has it done, in exhausting vast Riches out of all the Provinces of *Europe* to satiate the avarice and ambition of one Pompous See. Besides, the unanimous belief and practices of several Christian Provinces in the same Faith and Rites, what assurance does it not give for their being Apostolical? But when all are over-awed and commanded to believe or practise as one Spiritual Monarch pleases, their agreement has far less force. Nor is there fear of as many Christian Religions as there are Christian Provinces, provided they meet frequently in General and Provincial Councils, as they ought, and determine nothing of Faith to others which is doubtful to themselves, and resolve nothing to be Apostolical, but what is so clear to them all to be so, in the holy Scriptures, Tradition, &c. as they cannot doubt but it had its origin from the Apostles; for what's so clear to one Province, cannot be obscure to another, consulting the same safe means of not mistaking the holy Scriptures, holy Fathers, *&c.* Our Judgment are as agreeing as our Eyes. and no twenty men can so clearly see an object at such a distance, so as they cannot doubt they see it; but any three men of equal good eye-sight, at the same distance, must needs see the same. If Reformers have disagreed, 'twas because they stuck not to this Rule, and therefore their disagreement ought to be no prejudice to those who are resolved rigidly to adhere to it.

In my next I shall hint to you the Reasons of my Change, which so much scandalizes you, but indeed ought to edifie you, and all good Christians.

Your real Friend,

July, 30. 1679. *William Hutchinson.*

London, Printed for the Author, and are to be sold at the *Bear* and *Orange-tree* in *Prince's-Street*. 1679.